



Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development

Beth works on Graduating High School

Beth is 16 and a sophomore in high school. Beth has always struggled with school, but this semester she thinks she is going to fail two of her classes, which means she'll have to repeat 10th grade. She meets with her mentor, Tina, and says that she doesn't want to leave high school, but if she has to repeat 10th grade she might as well drop out and get a job.

Despite Beth's pessimism about finishing high school, Tina encourages her to set a goal to graduate. Beth feels overwhelmed thinking of all the work she will have to do to complete high school. Tina helps Beth realize that breaking down the larger goal of graduating into several small goals can make it less overwhelming. For example, Beth's first goal could be to pass her two classes. Together, Beth and Tina brainstorm what steps Beth could take. Beth decides she will meet with the teachers from both of her classes to find out exactly how she can pass.

Comment [eb1]: Sets goal with guidance

Comment [eb2]: Needs mentor's help to break down goal with guidance.

Comment [eb3]: Needs mentor's help to break down goal into steps.

A few days later, Beth and Tina meet again to go over Beth's assignments. In her Algebra class, she needs at least a C on her final exam in order to pass. In her Spanish class, she has to get an A on her final exam.

Beth decides to focus on her Spanish test because that is her worst subject. She and Tina brainstorm some ways for her to improve in this class. Beth has a friend, Pilar, whose family recently came to the U.S. from Mexico. Tina encourages Beth to ask Pilar if she would like to be language partners – Beth can speak to Pilar in English and in exchange, Pilar can help Beth study Spanish.

Comment [eb4]: Develops strategies with guidance.

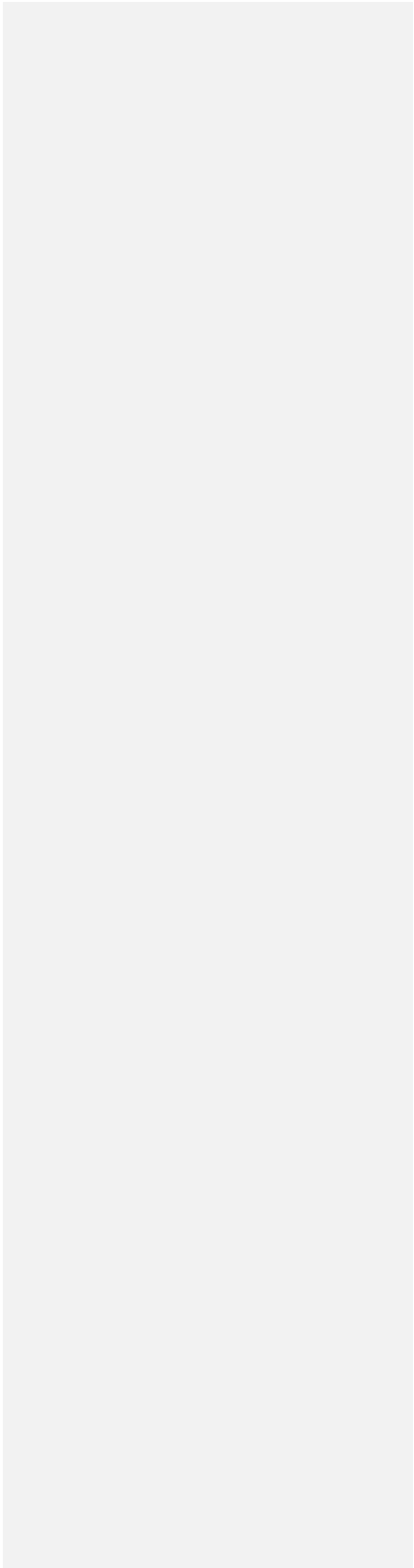
Comment [eb5]: Needs mentor's help to develop strategies

Fortunately, Beth is able to get a C+ on her Algebra exam; however, her grade on the Spanish test is not high enough to keep her from failing Spanish. Beth is very upset, and meets with her Spanish teacher after the exam to discuss her grade. Fortunately, Beth's teacher knows that different students may learn and remember information differently. He tells Beth that he is impressed that she and Pilar have been working together to help each other become bilingual. He decides to give Beth an oral exam, and she passes.

Comment [eb6]: Beth's teacher provides her with a solution.

Score for Beth at Breaking Down Long-term Goals: 3

Rationale: Beth is motivated to develop the skill of Vertical Coherence; however, at each stage, she shows a pattern of relying on her mentor, Tina, or her teacher, to provide the steps or strategies to reach her goal.





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Josh works on Helping the Environment

Josh is 17 years old and a junior in high school. When he meets with his mentor, Kevin, Josh wonders what he would have to do to start a recycling program in his town. Kevin suggests contacting his town selectman to get more information. But Josh doesn't know any of the officials in his community, and he's also not sure how to get in touch with them or whether they would listen to him.

Comment [eb7]: Josh recognizes that his time with Kevin would be a good time to work towards his goal.

Comment [eb8]: Evaluates whether contacting community officials is best option to meet goal – he considers whether the situation or timing is right.

Josh and Kevin brainstorm a little more, and Josh decides he can start telling all of his friends at school to recycle their soda and water bottles. He hopes they will then tell their friends and the domino effect will lead to an increase in recycling.

Comment [eb9]: Josh does not take the time to evaluate the best time or situation to meet his goal.

After a week or so, Josh realizes that his recycling idea isn't catching on. He's not sure what to do. Josh is a very social guy, but he does not usually take charge of these kinds of projects. Kevin encourages Josh to start a club at school. Maybe that way, Josh can get ideas from other people who share his concerns.

Comment [eb10]: Josh is showing the ability to recognize his limits/resources. But Josh also needs Kevin's help to recognize a better way to act towards his goal.

He talks to his friends about it, and a few of them like the idea of starting a club. One girl offers to lead the group, which is fine with Josh because he thinks she will do a good job. The members of the group agree that while they want to recycle, they do not have enough recycling bins in their school. Josh volunteers to go to their Environmental Science teacher for help. She tells Josh that in order to get every student to recycle, the school would need a recycling bin in every classroom, but unfortunately the school just doesn't have the money.

Comment [eb11]: Again, Josh is recognizing and using the resources present to reach his goal; however, he seems to lack initiative in some instances.

Comment [eb12]: Takes initiative to act after considering the situation. Recognizes a key resource in his context, the ES teacher.

Josh brings this information back to the group, and they decide to collect cardboard boxes and paint each one with a slogan about recycling. The group gets permission from their teachers to put the boxes in the classrooms and announce to each class that they have started a school-wide recycling project. The following week, Josh and his friends collect the boxes and load them into a friend's truck, and they take the bottles to a redemption center. After several more weeks, the club has collected \$150 that they can use to purchase bins for their school.

Comment [eb13]: Josh and friends act toward goal after establishing "the right situation."

Score for Josh at Seizing the Moment: 4

Rationale: Josh shows a lot of motivation to meet his goal. Josh shows competency and takes initiative about half the time to seize the moment. At times, Josh shows competence is recognizing the resources that he can take advantage of, but at other times he acts without thinking about the best time and situation to work towards his goal. Josh is doing great at seizing the moment, but we would not consider him an exemplar yet.